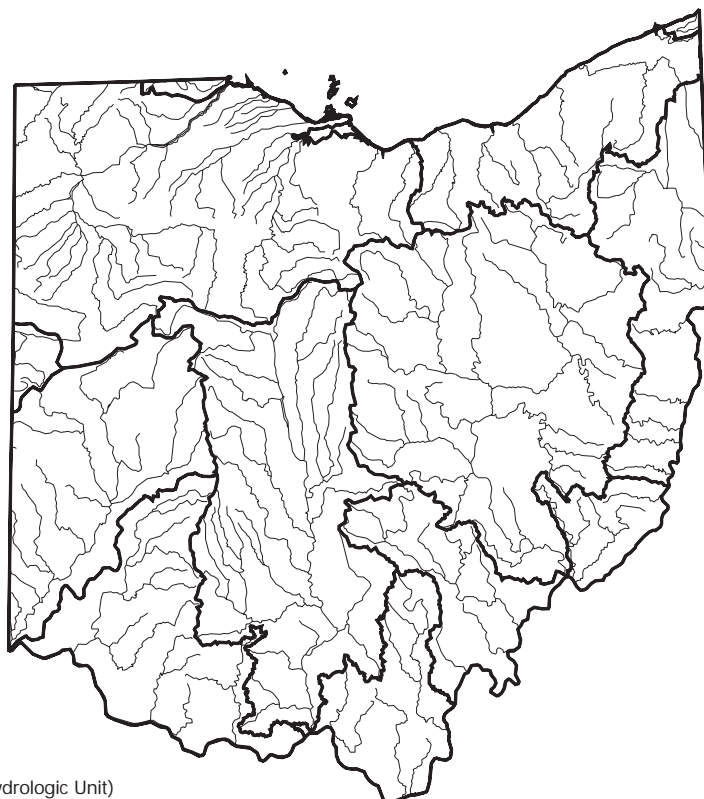


Ohio



— Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Ohio 1996 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

Ohio based their 1996 assessments on monitoring data collected between 1989 and 1994. Ohio's assessment methods compare observed ecological characteristics (including data on aquatic insects, fish species, habitat, and streamside vegetation) with background conditions found at least-impacted reference sites for a given ecoregion and stream type.

Ohio identified ecological impacts from organic enrichment

and low dissolved oxygen concentrations, siltation, habitat modification, metals, ammonia, and flow alterations. Fecal coliform bacteria indicate impaired swimming conditions in Ohio's rivers and lakes. These impacts stem from municipal discharges, runoff from agriculture, urban runoff, and combined sewer overflows.

Ohio estimates that wastewater treatment plant construction and upgrades have restored aquatic life to about 1,000 river miles since the 1970s. Since 1988, the percentage of surveyed river miles fully fit for swimming also grew from 49% to 57%. However, increasing threats from nonpoint sources could erode gains made with point source controls and slow the rate of restoration.

The most common impacts on Ohio lakes include nutrients, volume loss due to sedimentation, organic enrichment, and habitat alterations. Nonpoint sources, including agriculture, urban runoff, construction activities, and septic systems, generate most of these impacts. However, municipal point sources still affect 58% of the impaired lake acres.

Most of the Lake Erie shoreline is fit for recreational use, but a fish consumption advisory for channel catfish and carp remains in effect along the entire shoreline. Ohio also issued fish consumption advisories for all species of fish caught on 137 river miles and documented elevated levels of PCBs in fish caught at two small lakes.

Ground Water Quality

About 4.5 million Ohio residents depend upon wells for domestic water. Waste disposal activities, underground storage tank leaks, and spills are the dominant sources of ground water contamination in Ohio.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

To fully restore water quality, Ohio EPA advocates an ecosystem approach that confronts degradation on shore as well as in the water. Ohio's programs aim to correct nonchemical impacts, such as channel modification and the destruction of shoreline vegetation.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

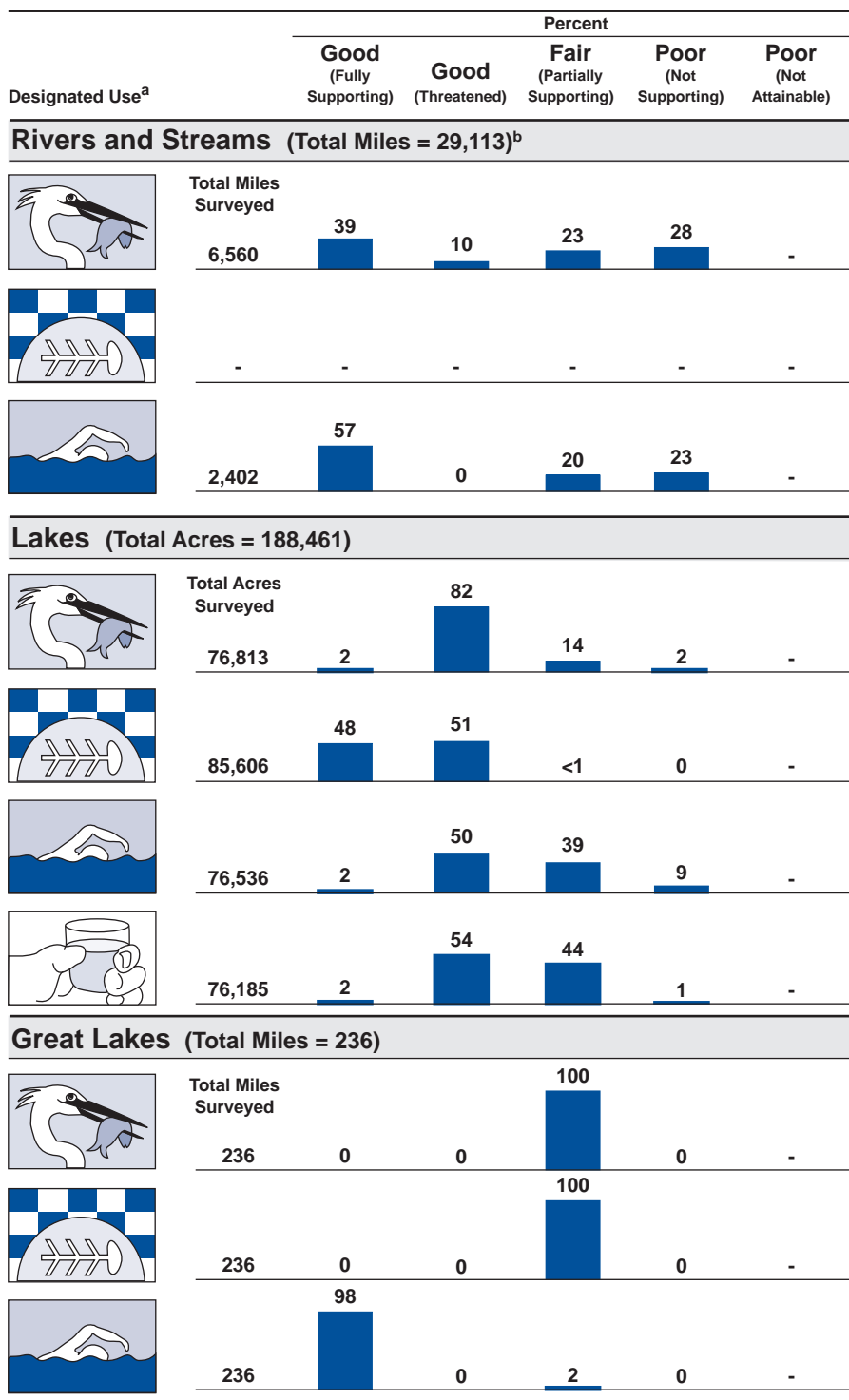
Ohio pioneered the integration of biosurvey data, physical habitat data, and bioassays with water chemistry data to measure the overall integrity of water resources. Biological monitoring provides the foundation of Ohio's water programs because traditional chemical monitoring alone may not detect episodic pollution events or non-chemical impacts. Ohio EPA found that biosurvey data can increase the detection of aquatic life use impairment by about 35% to 50%.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

^a A subset of Ohio's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

^b Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Individual Use Support in Ohio



Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.